

The Story of John Edgecomb

by FuzyDr4G0NZ

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Summary: Every story has a beginning and an end. For John, this was from the moment he left Harvest to the day he dies in a retirement home on Earth. This his story, written during his final days as he tries to find peace after a lifetime of war.

The Story of John Edgecomb

****A/N;** So, this the first chapter to the story of John Edgecomb and as such I'm using it to see what peoples reaction to the story is. No, I won't take it in a direction like most stories do on here where the character is some incredible badass that can take on anything and nor will I take it into to some weird storyline that isn't all that realistic. ******

****No,** I don't own anything except for my character, John Edgecomb and all the other characters I create along the way. No, he will not meet anyone from the main series, or if he does it will not be for very long and he probably won't know who it is. ******

****Yes,** there are references to things in the story, I always do that depending on what I'm doing/ reading/ whatever at the time. So, enjoy it and leave a review!******

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><p>I'll be honest, I'm not exactly sure why I'm writing this or who I'm writing this for. I don't have any family left. Not many people my age do. I guess I'm writing this for my own peace of mind, a way to sort out all that happened in my life. A lot of it went by so quickly I didn't even realise something was happening until it was over. It felt like one moment I was still a farm boy on Harvest than the next I was fighting for my life on Reach in the Epsilon Eridnus system some twenty odd years later.<p>

But, as I sit here in a nice little garden behind the large tower I

now live in. It is, essentially a retirement home, I like to think of it more like a prison because despite the lack of metal bars everything we do is monitored, we can't leave, not really. The staff don't like it very much if I call it that though. It's called 'The Seropian Centre for Active Retirees', it's a silly name really. We are hardly active, as the name suggests, in fact most of us just sit around a medium sized TV, the rest of us are usually too old or too tired to move vary far at all. But I digress. Sitting in the garden behind the centre I can enjoy the fresh breeze that rolls in over from lake Michigan, I don't even have to listen to the hustle and bustle of the city, I like it here, its nice and detached from the world. Kind of like most of the inhabitants here at the centre.

As I sit here writing its so easy to fall back into the world of memory and thought. At least, I think it is. Some of the old grey haired residents just fall asleep, a couple never wake up again. Some slip back into their own memories, but then they'll come crashing back to reality when the going gets though, one or two residents here were also present at Reach during The Fall and they can't get those damned memories out of their heads. But I found the trick is not to try and force it out, you'll only think harder about all the friends and family you lost during that fateful day. The trick is not to try and forget, that way you'll eventually become numb to the pain at the very least.

But I guess if your reading this than you're not interested in me talking are you? Well, every story had a beginning. My story began on the twenty third of September in 2505, it was, apparently, raining on the day I was born to Janet and Paul Edgecomb at a little past three in the afternoon. I don't remember much of my childhood, not until I was about four or five when my mother was killed in an Innies bomb on Cygnus when she went to visit her sister, my dad, who was a prison guard at the time ended up quitting his job at the prison to better look after me and my mum's farm. I spent most of my early years helping my dad around the place and repairing the large JOTUN machines. Now they did the real heavy lifting around the farm, ploughing the fields, planting and harvesting the crops and all the other stuff that needed doing on the farm.

My father used to say though, that when it comes to animals, meat always tastes better when it's tended with care and love that a machine just can't give it. So none of all this rubbish genetically grown test tube food you can get, none of it, is worthy of the name, meat. It's just rubbish. Proper farm raised animals always gave the best tasting meat. If you raised a hen just right she'd be more than happy to lay a dozen eggs, and they'd be the best tasting eggs you'd ever have.

When I was about eight years old my father took me into Utgard for a reason I can't remember. What I do remember about that trip though is watching a man, a scrawny little man with long and thin hair, he was small as well. Like real small. But what was interesting was what he had with him; a mouse. A little brown mouse from Earth, it had little black oil drops for eyes and it was the most incredible thing I'd seen in my life up to that point, also the most alien too. My father recognised the man as Eduard Bitterbuck. An odd name for sure, but he was a rather strange fellow. Eduard and his mouse, Mr Jingles would sit in the Utgard mall and Eduard would have a little stage set up and he would stand there and cry out to the crowds.

"Come now, come on up and see the most amazing mouse in the galaxy!" He cried out in an accent I had never heard before on Harvest. Later I found out off my father that Eduard was from Earth and that he was Cajun, his accent was a weird mix of French and English, a very strange combination to me any way. At first my dad had wanted to avoid the strange man and carry on but I had insisted on watching, and to this day I am glad I did. I watched as Eduard would cry out commands and little Mr Jingles would obey them without a moments hesitation and he never got something wrong. He was a smart little mouse was Mr Jingles, he would run around on a little multi-coloured spool like one of those circus elephants you see in cartoons. Watching that mouse put a smile on my face, and a frown on my dads.

It turned out, you see, that Eduard had spent some time in the prison my dad used to work at. He had been accused of raping a little girl, he had then set on fire behind the apartment building she lived in with her parents, the fire had spread and the building also caught ablaze. Six more people died, two of which were children. After spending time in the prison where my dad worked, he was cleared of the charges for one reason or another. But during his time at the prison he had befriended the little brown mouse, Mr Jingles. My dad did admit that Eduard was one of the better prisoners during his time, despite being innocent, but Eduard gave my fathers the creeps because not once during his time at the prison had Eduard claimed to be innocent. He had just sat in his cell and did whatever it was that prisoners did. My fathers suspicions were proven correct a few years later when Eduard really did rape and murder someone.

But let's not get into that now, it's not important. After Eduard got done for his crime I had somehow ended up with Mr Jingles, he became my own little pet. He liked little mint treats, which was good because I liked them too and it was a great way into corralling my dad to buy more of them. As I had said before my childhood was either spent on the farm or going to school, it wasn't really all that interesting, nothing ever was on Harvest. At least, not until the summer solstice when the Governor and the agricultural AI, Mac, would fire the large Mass Driver between the number four and five strand of the orbital tethers. There would be fireworks and a bonfires, the Governor would also throw a massive party that nearly everyone on Harvest would attend. As you can guess it was a large party that would last until the early hours of the next day. Once or twice I remember it lasting until well after dawn, in fact I think it went on until around midday one time. It would always be spectacular, no matter what.

One night, when I was fifteen years old, I lay on the back of one of the JOTUN machines looking up at the sky and what I saw, the millions of stars, the hundreds of human worlds, the possibility of alien life in the cosmos, it was then, at that very moment I knew what I wanted to do for a living. I wanted to travel the stars! But I didn't want to have to do it in the merchant navy or be stuck on a starship. No, I wanted to be a marine I decided. I would be a hard ass, tough as nails, and in my pubescent mind I figured that if I wore a marine uniform than I would have women swooning over me left right and centre, it turned out I was wrong but by then it was too late for me to turn back.

The day I told my father was a Sunday. It was during breakfast when I told him and he simply put down his knife and fork and looked me in

the eye. I don't know if I was more scared of the fact that he wasn't angry or the fact that he didn't look surprised.

"I guess I shoulda' known really," my father said. "I won't stop you if that's what your worried about, but I am disappointed. This was your mothers farm, John. Even when we were kids all she ever wished for was her own farm, that's why we moved here. I'm gonna' miss your company and help around the farm but it's your decision son, I can't make it for you. Plus, your mother would have killed me if I tried to force you into doing something you didn't want to." He said in a calm manner, although I could see the hurt in his eyes and hear it in his voice. He seemed to mope around after that, we spent a lot of time together between then and me leaving for boot. We went on a holiday to Arcadia and visited some of my fathers side of the family while a friend on Harvest looked after the farm. They had been good years, they had.

I had signed on for the UNSC marines, not the colonial military, although I doubt your old enough to know what the colonial military was. I did that at my fathers request, he'd said that if I'm gonna fight I better fight the good fight, the real fight and not let the Innies bastards win and to my mum proud, and I intended to do that tenfold.

So, I rode on the back of a flatbed full of corn all the way into Utgard. All I took with me was an old dirty canvas bag with a pair of clothes and picture of my parents and I at the farm. It was an old picture, sure, but it was one of the only ones where my mum and I were in it together. In the pocket of my sun bleached and worn denim jeans was an old cigar box that I used to transport Mr Jingles. I couldn't leave him at home, I had wanted to but my dad told me to take him.

"Something to remember home by." He'd said. I don't really know how but I managed to get Mr Jingles all the way to Eridnus which is where I did my training, and boy was I glad I had Mr Jingles with me, he kept going through it all I think, him and the need to travel the stars and beat the Innies. But that, my training, is another story altogether. One where I met some good friends, made some enemies and learnt what it meant to have a brother and sister whose very lives would depend upon my actions and vice versa, and in 2523 Eridnus 2 was not a very good place to be.

End
file.